

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

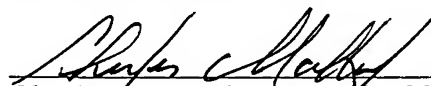
Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, and 12-25 are pending in this application. Applicant appreciates the Office's recognition of the allowability of claims 1, 2, 5, 7, and 12-16. The Office has rejected claims 8-11 under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Applicant has canceled claims 8-11, without prejudice, thus rendering the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection moot. Claims 17-25 are new.

The Office Action states that "the claims require that the cross-section complete a 120° degree rotation through a distance of one complete circumference of the ring ... [t]his works if the triangle is an equilateral triangle ... [i]t doesn't work for the claimed non-equilateral triangles." Applicant thanks the Office for the opportunity to clarify the claims and respectfully submits that the rigid ring-like article of manufacture may have triangular cross sections that are not equilateral in shape. The rigid ring-like article of manufacture must, however, have at least one cross section that does have the shape of an equilateral triangle.

The Office has noted that the drawings received by the Office on November 9, 2006, are acceptable. The Office has, however, objected to the drawings based on the dependence of claims 8-11 on claim 1. In view of the claim amendments and remarks made herein, Applicant requests the withdrawal of the objection to the drawings.

Applicant respectfully submits that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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